

RA - Rheumatoid Arthritis

RA-C COMPLICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand common complications of rheumatoid arthritis and their management.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic disease that worsens over time. The patient may experience symptom-free days and periods of worsening symptoms.
2. Review the common complications associated with rheumatoid arthritis, e.g., infection, renal disease, lymphoproliferative disorders, and cardiovascular disease.
3. Review the treatment plan with the patient. Explain that complications are worsened by not participating with the treatment plan.

RA-CM CASE MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand the importance of integrated case management in achieving physical and behavioral health.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss roles and responsibilities of each member of the care team including the patient, family/caregiver, and providers in the case management plan.
2. Explain the coordination and integration of resources and services in developing and implementing the case management plan.
3. Explain the need to obtain the appropriate releases of information necessary to support integrated case management and to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality. **Refer to AF-CON.**

RA-DP DISEASE PROCESS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the pathophysiology of rheumatoid arthritis.

STANDARDS:

1. Review the disease process of rheumatoid arthritis.
2. Review the physical limitation that may be imposed by rheumatoid arthritis.
3. Explain that treatments are highly individualized and may vary over the course of the disease.
4. Refer to the Arthritis Foundation or community resources as appropriate.

RA-EQ EQUIPMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will have an understanding and will demonstrate (when appropriate) the proper use and care of assisted medical devices/equipment.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the indications for and benefits of the prescribed medical equipment.
2. Discuss the types and the features of the assisted medical devices/equipment as appropriate.
3. Discuss and/or demonstrate the proper use, care, and cleaning of assisted medical devices/equipment.
4. Explain that the patient/family/caregiver will demonstrate the proper use of the assisted medical devices/equipment.
5. Discuss the signs of assisted medical devices/equipment malfunction and the proper action in case of malfunction as appropriate.

RA-EX EXERCISE

OUTCOME: The patient will maintain an optimal level of mobility with minimal discomfort.

STANDARDS:

1. Emphasize that exercise is an important component of the treatment plan. Stress the importance of balancing rest and exercise.
2. Explain that exercise, when done correctly, can help reduce rheumatoid arthritis symptoms, including the following:
 - a. Preventing joint stiffness
 - b. Keeping muscles strong around the joints
 - c. Improving joint flexibility
 - d. Reducing pain
 - e. Maintaining strong and healthy bone and cartilage tissue
 - f. Improving joint alignment
 - g. Improving overall fitness
3. Emphasize that exercise can also help with weight reduction and contributes to an improved sense of well-being, enhance sleep, and reduce stress and depression.
4. Review the different types of exercises including active and passive range of motion, muscle strengthening, and endurance exercises, e.g., water exercises, hot tubs.
5. If applicable, review and demonstrate the prescribed exercise plan.

6. Emphasize the importance of “warm-ups and cool-downs.” Explain how the application of heat or cold prior to beginning exercise may reduce joint discomfort. Explain that people who have poor circulation should talk to their healthcare provider before using hot or ice packs.
7. Caution the patient not to overexert. Stress the importance of taking a break when experiencing pain or fatigue. Explain the signs and symptoms of when to discontinue exercising, e.g., chest pain, shortness of breath, or joint pain.

RA-FU FOLLOW-UP

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the importance of follow-up in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the patient’s responsibility in managing rheumatoid arthritis.
2. Review treatment plan with the patient/family, emphasizing the need for keeping appointments and adhering to medications regimens.

RA-L LITERATURE

OUTCOME: The patient/family will receive literature about rheumatoid arthritis.

STANDARDS:

1. Provide the patient/family with literature on rheumatoid arthritis.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

RA-LA LIFESTYLE ADAPTATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient will understand the lifestyle changes necessary to optimize performance of everyday activities.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss that treatment for arthritis is usually a combination of rest and relaxation, exercise, proper diet, medication, joint protection, and ways to conserve energy. Discuss way to pain management. **Refer to RA-PM.**
2. Review activity limitation and the importance of avoiding fatigue.
3. Discuss ADL aids. Make a referral to social services for assistance in procuring such devices.
4. Explain how exercise and social involvement may decrease the depression and anger often associated with rheumatoid arthritis.
5. Discuss how self-image, pain, fatigue, inflammation, limited joint mobility, and medications can alter sexual desire and sexual activity.

6. Assess level of acceptance and offer support and referral to social services and community resources as appropriate.
7. Discuss the importance of relaxation to minimize stress, thus minimizing symptoms. A relaxed body means the muscles are relaxed, relieving some of the pain associated with rheumatoid arthritis.
8. Discuss the techniques that may reduce stress and depression such as meditation, imagery, prayer, hypnosis, and biofeedback.
9. **Refer to HPDP.**

RA-M MEDICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the purpose, proper use, and expected outcomes of prescribed drug therapy.

STANDARDS:

1. Describe the name, strength, purpose, dosing directions, and storage of the medication.
2. Discuss the risks, benefits, and common or important side effects of the medication and follow up as appropriate.
3. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.
4. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.
5. Explain that rheumatoid arthritis is chronic, making long-term management of pain and symptoms of the disease very important.

RA-MNT MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY

OUTCOME: The patient and family will understand the specific nutritional intervention(s) needed for treatment or management of rheumatoid arthritis.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is a systematic nutrition care process provided by a Registered Dietitian (RD) that consists of the following:
 - a. Assessment of the nutrition related condition.
 - b. Identification of the patient's nutritional problem.
 - c. Identification of a specific nutrition intervention therapy plan.

- d. Evaluation of the patient's nutritional care outcomes.
- e. Reassessment as needed.
2. Review the basic nutrition recommendations for the treatment plan.
3. Discuss the benefits of nutrition and exercise to health and well-being.
4. Assist the patient/family in developing an appropriate nutrition care plan.
5. Refer to other providers or community resources as needed.

RA-N NUTRITION

OUTCOME: The patient will strive to achieve and maintain a safe weight level through a nutritionally balanced diet.

STANDARDS:

1. Assess the patient's current nutritional patterns and review improvements which can be made. **Refer to HPDP-N.**
2. Explain that a well-balanced diet helps to manage body weight and provides the body with the nutrients it needs to stay healthy.
3. Refer to a registered dietitian.

RA-PM PAIN MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand the patient's pain management program.

STANDARDS:

1. Stress the need to fully participate with the prescribed treatment plan, that may include chronic pain management.
2. Emphasize the importance of rest and the avoidance of fatigue.
3. Discuss the use of heat and cold.
4. Discuss the techniques that may reduce stress and depression such as meditation and bio-feedback.
5. Emphasize the role of exercise in reducing pain, maximizing mobility, and reducing stress/anxiety.
6. Refer to physical therapy as appropriate.

RA-S SAFETY AND INJURY PREVENTION

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand the importance of injury prevention and implement necessary measures to avoid injury.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain the importance of body mechanics and proper lifting techniques in relation to physical limitations to avoid injury.
2. Explain ways to adapt the home to improve safety and prevent injuries, such as return throw rugs, install safety bars in hallways and near stairs.
3. Stress the importance and proper use mobility devices (cane, walker, electric scooters, wheel chair).
4. Explain the importance of recognizing driving limitations. Refer to the community resources.

RA-SM STRESS MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will role of stress management in rheumatoid arthritis.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that uncontrolled stress is linked with increased exacerbations of rheumatoid arthritis.
2. Explain that uncontrolled stress can interfere with the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.
3. Explain that effective stress management may reduce the number of relapses, as well as help improve the patient's health and well-being.
4. Discuss that stress may exacerbate adverse health behaviors such as increased tobacco, alcohol or other substance use, all of which can increase the risk of morbidity and mortality from rheumatoid arthritis.
5. Explain that stress may cause inappropriate eating which will exacerbate the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis.
6. Discuss various stress management strategies which may help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Examples may include:
 - a. Becoming aware of your own reactions to stress
 - b. Recognizing and accepting your limits
 - c. Talking with people you trust about your worries or problems
 - d. Setting realistic goals
 - e. Getting enough sleep
 - f. Maintaining a healthy diet
 - g. Exercising regularly as tolerated
 - h. Taking vacations
 - i. Practicing meditation, self-hypnosis, and positive imagery

- j. Practicing physical relaxation methods such as deep breathing or progressive muscular relaxation
 - k. Participating in spiritual or cultural activities
7. Provide referrals as appropriate.

RA-TE TESTS

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand the test(s) to be performed, including indications and impact on further care.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain the test ordered and method of collection.
2. Explain the necessity, benefits, and risks of the test to be performed, as applicable, including possible complications that may result from not having the test performed.
3. Explain how the test relates to the course of treatment.
4. Explain any necessary preparation and instructions for the test.
5. Explain the meaning of the test results, as appropriate.